

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Claims 1, 3, 9, 15, and 18 are cancelled. Claims 2, 4-8, 10-13, 20, and 22-23 are allowed. Claims 14, 16-17, 19 and 21 remain pending in this application as amended herein, and claim 24 is added. Accordingly, claims 14, 16-17, 19, 21, and 24 are submitted for the Examiner's reconsideration.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's allowance of claims 2, 4-8, 10-13, 20, 22, and 23.

In the Office Action, claims 14, 17, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato (U.S. Patent No. 6,233,454), and claims 15-16 and 18-19 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim 14 has been amended to recite features previously called for in claim 15, and claims 17 and 21 have each been amended to recite features previously called for in claim 18. Moreover, claims 16 and 19 have each been rewritten in independent form.

Applicant therefore submits that each of claims 14, 16, 17, 19 and 21 is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the Examiner's objection and the withdrawal of the rejection 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

New claim 24 recites features similar to those called for in claims 19 and 21 and is similarly supported. Applicant therefore submits that claim 24 is likewise in condition for allowance.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If,

however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which the Examiner might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,
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